

NEWS FROM



THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY

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Federal government's National Conversation is \$1.6 million "boondoggle for blabbermouths"

WASHINGTON, DC -- The federal government doesn't think Americans talk enough. So the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) gave away \$1.6 million of taxpayer's money yesterday as part of a new program to encourage a "National Conversation."

"Only in America!" marveled Libertarian Party spokesman Bill Winter. "Only in America would the government pay people \$1.6 million to talk more. I mean, this is the nation of Rush Limbaugh, New York cab drivers, and Bill Clinton's State of the Union speeches! Insufficient chatter is not generally perceived to be one of America's most pressing problems."

The National Conversation program is designed to get "Americans to think and talk about themselves" and stimulate discussion "about what the American people are as a nation," according to news reports. The money was distributed in grants around the country to "creative people," communities, and civic groups.

NEH spokesman Gary Krull said the \$1.6 million will be spent on "guidelines, moderators, and meeting rooms" for the National Conversation.

"I'm not a government bureaucrat, so maybe I'm missing something, but Americans seem to have no problem finding places to chat -- on talk radio, in coffee shops, on the street, and on the telephone," said Winter. "And we seem to manage our conversations quite nicely, thank you, without federally subsidized moderators and guidelines."

"Americans used to believe in free speech. Now NEH bureaucrats believe in expensive speech -- expensive, tax-subsidized speech. Here's the Libertarian Party's two cents worth of conversation: Abolish this preposterous program. End this boondoggle for blabbermouths," said Winter.

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